



## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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# El Monte Continues Tough Stance on Illegal Fireworks

**El Monte, Calif.** — The City of El Monte wants all residents to know that using or possessing dangerous illegal fireworks will not be tolerated this Fourth of July and will result in fines or possible arrest.

“We have a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to people in our community using these illegal fireworks,” said Mayor Pro Tem Bart Patel, the Chair of the City’s special fireworks task force. “We have too much at stake to risk the dangerous consequences of using illegal fireworks. Too often, innocent people get hurt and valuable property is damaged.”

The City will continue strict enforcement of an ordinance passed by the City Council in 2013 that issues an immediate \$1,000 fine to those caught using illegal fireworks. The ordinance will also make property owners liable for illegal fireworks used on their property, as well as parents whose children are caught violating the new rules. Should offenders not pay their citations, a lien will be placed on their property taxes and the City will receive payment at that time.

“We want all of our residents to have a fun and safe holiday,” said Councilmember Juventino “J” Gomez. “These fireworks are more than just a nuisance—they are dangerous to our families who want to celebrate our nation’s independence. We have asked our police department to step up efforts to enforce our zero-tolerance approach to illegal fireworks.”

El Monte will also be stepping up code enforcement of trash clean up after the holidays.

“On the fifth of July, there are properties in our community that are a mess, with firework trash littering the streets,” said Patel. “We have to hold those accountable who are bringing down our quality of life. We will have crews issuing citations for those who do not follow the rules.”

The City encourages residents to support local nonprofits by purchasing safe and sane fireworks at various firework stands throughout El Monte. Many local nonprofits count on the stands to serve as a major fundraiser for their organizations.

El Monte is one of 39 Los Angeles County cities that allow the sale of “safe and sane” fireworks, which are fireworks that don’t explode or leave the ground. Only fireworks marked "safe and sane" are legal and can only be used on July 3 and July 4 between 10 a.m. and 11 p.m.

The City will educate residents of the dangers and fines associated with using illegal fireworks through City newsletters, school district publications and notices in utility bills.

Over the past few years, there has been overwhelming resident concern over the use of illegal fireworks, which has led to serious injuries, property fires and an overburdened El Monte Police Department. Last year, the El Monte Police Department confiscated more than 46 tons of illegal fireworks during 41 sting operations in several area cities, resulting in 45 felony arrests.

According to the United States Fire Administration, in 2010, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated approximately 8,600 people for firework-related injuries, with the majority of the injuries occurring around the weeks surrounding the Fourth of July.

Anybody currently in possession of fireworks can turn them in, no questions asked, at any local fire station.

Any illegal fireworks can be reported to the El Monte Police Department at (626) 580-2100.

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**The City of El Monte**, located in Southern California, is committed to improving the quality of life for its citizens and strives to provide its community personalized service, uncompromising commitment, and individualized accountability. For information on the City of El Monte, please call 626-580-2001 or visit [www.elmonteca.gov](http://www.elmonteca.gov).